

## THE PRESENT PASSOVER

(NOVEMBER 1916)

Some months have passed since we last referred to the inwardness of the present war, to the spiritual fact of which present external events are but the secular expression. We all recognise that it is a time of transition and pass-over, one that is changing our consciousness, enlarging its range, calling us back to realities, and forcing us to see life from a different and saner standpoint than we hitherto have done. The Destroying Angel is in our midst, once more "executing judgment against all the gods of Egypt," consuming our shams and falsities, exacting as time proceeds more and more toll of the things we cling to and by which we have sought to shore up our transient existence in a world of shadows into a simulation of permanent and real life. Some nations and many men have lost their all, save their soul; lost it, we may be assured, that they may truly find and save their soul. Some have been shorn of great tracts of territory or seen it devastated and obliterated of all that gave it worth, whilst scarcely a family exists in Europe that has not its private losses, some "first-born" treasure of life or substance to mourn. Where sacrifice, whether of life, country, relatives, property, or personal service, has not been volunteered, a Power not our own has stepped in and exacted it from us involuntarily. It is working through events the appalling horrors of which wring our hearts, yet It goes inexorably on, taking from us not what we, Its puppets, would give, but what It wants. The civil government exacts things from us—military service, increased taxation, control of our affairs—and willy-nilly we have to render to Cæsar the things that are

his; yet palpably Cæsar himself is driven by and has become the servile instrument of a Power behind and stronger than himself, constraining him to swallow his former political principles and act in a diametrically reverse direction. The whole world has been diverted from its normal interests and been set in one or another form to assist, as unconscious agents of the Destroyer, in promoting the general conflagration. The material wealth of the nations is becoming divested and dissipated by circumstances the "force" of which—no longer a mere figure of speech—stands over them like a schoolmaster insisting to naughty children, "Empty your pockets,—and no back-keeps!" Never before has the world experienced such an enforced universal renunciation; never such an opportunity, if as such it will regard it, for self-abandonment and learning the beatitude of the poor. More and more renunciation is daily being called for, and the end is not yet. In the presence of the utter sacrifice some countries, some families, many individuals, have been called upon to make, those who have as yet gone scatheless must surely be smitten with remorse at being so unprivileged as to have parted with nothing, and feel themselves mean laggards in the presence of the infinite surrender and whole-hearted service offered by their fellows. For "the Great War," perhaps we shall one day say "the Great Sacrifice." For such it is. "When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover" (Exod. xii. 26-27). Well for us if so we can, for those will then be of all men the most miserable who have to confess that at the day of universal oblation they were numbered among the unsacrificed.

Meanwhile out of the chaos and the general crucible a new spirit is being generated, and beneath all our heart-sickness comes the inward urge to endure; the sense of "the glory of going on," even though it be through greater, more devastating sorrow. Therefore let us keep the feast; not despondently, but with high courage and confidence, equipped for eventualities, ready to move whithersoever they take us, and to accommodate

ourselves to whatever new ideas and perceptions of truth they impose upon us. For so it was directed of the first passover, and the old words hold good to-day: "Ye shall eat it with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, your staff in your hand." Tagore has expressed the same thought in modern words:—

All the black evils in the world have overflowed their banks.  
Yet, oarsmen, take your places with the blessing of sorrow in your souls!

Whom do you blame, brothers?—Bow your heads down;  
The sin has been yours and ours.

The heat growing in the heart of God for ages—  
The cowardice of the weak, the arrogance of the strong, the greed of fat prosperity, the rancour of the deprived, pride of race, and insult to man—  
Has burst God's peace, raging in storm.

Like a ripe pod, let the tempest break its heart in pieces, scattering thunders;  
Stop your bluster of abuse and self-praise, my friends,  
And with the calm of silent prayer on your brows sail forward to the shore of the new world!<sup>1</sup>

For it has become obvious to all that we are moving rapidly towards a "new world," a new order of things, and that this crisis marks the transition, and is, in biblical language, a "pass-over" of just such a character as that described in the Book of Exodus as occurring "when Israel came out of Egypt." What does such a pass-over imply, and what the order of things to which the transition is being made?

To deal with these questions from the mystic's standpoint and under scriptural guidance, let us remember that, in addition to being our great spiritual guide, the Bible is the greatest textbook of occult science that exists. It is the chart of human spiritual evolution during the ages for which it was written, under the superintendence of Christ, the Lord of those ages; and, though it speaks not in modern colloquial or scientific terminology, but in a symbolical and highly scientific language of its own which is scarcely recognised or understood by modern readers, it clearly indicates for

<sup>1</sup> "The Oarsmen," in *The Times*, 28th January 1916.

those who can read it the position at which we have at present arrived and the stages of development through which we have yet racially to pass. In brief articles like this it is impossible to expound fully the philosophic basis upon which the Scriptures impliedly rest, and one must ask that certain facts be assumed as true. One of those facts is that our planet and the system to which it belongs form but part of a vast clockwork of interknit forces, worlds or modes of being, of which we in our present state see but the physical aspect to the exclusion of other aspects which are not physical. We, here, live upon the plane of phenomena and effects, and until our inner eyes are opened to what is going on invisibly around us we remain unconscious of the realms of spiritual noumena, causes, and cosmic ideation which make those phenomena possible and create changes in the physical, social, and spiritual conditions of this planet from time to time. The seen and the unseen worlds are in constant interaction, and, as is declared in the Church collect for this Michaelmas day on which these words are written, "the services of angels and men are constituted and ordained in a wonderful order" towards a great evolutionary goal. And as the face of an ordinary timepiece is parcelled out into minutes, quarters, and hours that express the activities of the interior works, so were we to see in its entirety the clockwork of the universe we should discern the extent to which physical events and cataclysms and crises in human history are the surface-records of spiritual energies at work beyond our present sense-observation. Further, as our clocks record major and minor subdivisions of time, so the Great Clock of the universe strikes its hours, half-hours, and quarters, and the echo of its chimes is heard among us in the form of great world-events and changes that periodically occur and of which the present moment is one. It is these moments of less or greater crisis which are implied by the biblical term "pass-over," and it was to keep prominently before the human memory the assurance that such moments would periodically and infallibly occur and be attended by great upheavals, distress, and

destruction of existing conditions, that the Hebrew feast of the "pass-over" was instituted. Without going further into details it may be briefly stated here that for advanced students this subject has always been one of astronomical science, and that it is in terms of astronomy and the Zodiac that it can most conveniently be expressed. The Zodiac—derived from *zōa*, the "living creatures" of Ezekiel, the "beasts before the Throne" of the Apocalypse; in other words, the belt or circle of directing vital forces of our system as they emanate from God—is a chart of the celestial planisphere and is that greatest and oldest of Bibles referred to in Psalm cxix. 89, as "the word for ever settled (or determined) in the heavens," and the course of the solar system and the precession of the equinoxes through it constitute a guide by means of which some things concerning human destiny can be explicated. It is difficult to construe correctly the written Scripture without some knowledge of and reference to that older Scripture in the heavens continually referred to and reflected in their pages, and I must make some allusion to the latter now.

The approach from the heaven of heavens to the physical world and to human conditions of the eternal Christ, in preparation for Whom the Hebrew people and its religion were raised up, synchronised with the pass-over of the solar system into the zodiacal sign or sector of the celestial planisphere known as Aries—the Ram; the actual advent and incarnation of Christ with one into the sign of Pisces—the Fishes; and the change which is now occurring with a pass-over into that of Aquarius—the Water-bearer, or Water-man; a sign of greater portent than even the former two, for although the Zodiac contains twelve divisions there are four major or cardinal ones, corresponding with the four arms of the cosmic Cross, namely, the four "living creatures" spoken of in the Scripture as the Lion, the Ox, the Man (*i.e.* the Waterman), and the Eagle. Treating man (individually and collectively) as the symbol and measure of the Cosmos, and relating these signs to his organism, the Ram is allotted to the

head; the Fishes to the feet; the Waterman to the legs. This will convey nothing to those unversed in its deep implications, which I will try to state simply. The significance of our race and planet being brought at the time of the founding of the Abrahamic family and dispensation within the especial influence of the Ram, and of the Ram being associated with the head or seat of intelligence, is that then for the first time the racial consciousness became aware of the truth that a new factor, a new element, from the spiritual plane, was in process of becoming introduced into the psychical and physical fabric of this fallen planet for the purpose of restoring and redeeming it. It meant that "the day-spring (or fountal source of life) from on high" was about to visit us, and the fact is veiled, yet written large for those who can penetrate the veil, in the incident of the patriarch's proposed immolation of his son when he beheld near at hand a ram caught in a thicket. The ram of his vision was none other than the Lamb of God coming down from heaven for us men and for our salvation into the "thicket" of this gross and material world and the disordered tangle of human conditions to purge and revivify them. It was in this forward-looking way that "your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad."

During the period from Abraham to Christ the world remained within the astronomic influence of the Ram, and the ram's-horn trumpets of Jewry proclaimed the impending downfall of the Jericho-walls of human materialism and resistance to divine light and love. At length came the next great passover. The symbolic vision of the ram caught in the thicket became fulfilled in very deed by the incarnation of the Christ in this world. Our system passed out of the influence of the Ram and entered that of the Fishes. I have said that the former sign is referable to the human head and the latter to the feet, and the bearing of this is that Christ had passed from the heights to the depths; had humbled Himself from the zenith to the nadir of existence; was no longer a prospective possibility as a Redeemer apprehended by expectant faith and approached only

by the higher spiritual consciousness of seers and prophets, but was a present actualised Fact, brought down to our very "feet" and normal minds, one "which we have looked upon and our hands have handled." "Heaven is My throne and earth is My footstool," and from throne to footstool He came down, fulfilling the promise that He would make His "enemies"—every form of resistance to the Christ-nature—His footstool, and guiding our "feet" (the lower sensual understanding which serves as a pediment to our higher spiritual mind) into the way of peace. Hence the significance of His washing the disciples' feet and saying "he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit"; in our higher part we are already and always clean; it is only our "feet," our lower minds and personality, that are foul and need cleansing.

Thus is explained the attribution of the Ram and the Fishes zodiacal signs to the head and feet of man respectively, and also the numerous allusions to "fishes" characterising the New Testament and early Christian art and literature. Everyone is familiar with the *Ichthus* or fish-symbol of Christ, and with references to Him as the Great Fish and His followers as little fishes,<sup>1</sup> to apostles and teachers as "fishers of men," and in a previous paper I have shown that the "two small fishes" of the parable of the feeding of the multitude signified the development in the racial organism of a measure of spirituality it had previously lacked.

And now after two thousand years of the Christ-influence upon this planet comes another pass-over. We are passing out of Pisces and coming into the sphere

<sup>1</sup> "So many fishes (*pisciculi*) bred in the water and saved by one Great Fish" (Tertullian); "Christ is a Fish that lives in the midst of the waters" (St Augustine), and the reference can be carried back to the Great Fish which swallowed Jonah. Remains of the idea survive in the *piscina* or holy water basins in churches, in the eating of fish on Friday, in the Papal or "Fisherman's Ring" worn by the Pope, and the fish-headed mitres of bishops. But before Christian times, both the Hindu Vishnu and the Greek Bacchus were also called "fish"; the reason being that every great spiritual impulse has originated when the Pisces sector of the Zodiac dominated.

of Aquarius, the Water-bearer—a sign that in the literature of the old mystics will be found referable to the legs of man; the bearing of which is that as after His descent into this world Christ ascended into heaven, so in the collective body of man shall the Christ-spirit rise upwards from the feet and gradually suffuse and transmute every portion of his organism. It is with reference to the legs that it is written "many shall *run* to and fro and knowledge (Christ-consciousness) shall be increased." Twenty centuries of Christianity and Christ-influence, many will say with the present state of the world in mind, have not wrought much. No—and yes. Not to the outward eye, or the first glance; but look deeper. Reverse the position, and ask yourself what would have been the world's spiritual condition now had no Christ come twenty centuries ago? Despite and amid all the present evil of the world, all the materialism and murder, all the false gods and spiritual impotence and perversities of understanding, at least beginnings have been made for some future efflorescence, foundations laid in the intelligence and consciences of men upon which a superstructure can be raised when all the rubbish has been cleared and destroyed which the laying of foundations always entails. No one saw more clearly than the Lord Himself the terrible evils the mere fact of His entry into the world would entail for centuries to come, the rivalries it would set up, the sword it would bring in place of the peace He longed to give. The sudden admission of light always creates intense commotion among the denizens of darkness; the entrance of the Light of the World into our planet has culminated in the horrors of to-day. Such, He knew, would be the inevitable result of the initial stage of His work; but only of the initial stage; things which "must needs be," and which would continue to be until the great clock-work of cosmic forces brought about the close of the initial stage and sounded the hour of pass-over into another. Oh, those first two thousand years! Looking across them, with compassionate foreknowledge of all that would occur in them, and vivid con-



sciousness of the collective wrongs and sufferings, abominations and horrors, they would involve, to the next great cosmic transition, no wonder He yearned for that new hour to strike; no wonder He longed for the interval to pass and become blotted out, and exclaimed prophetically to His disciples, "with desire I have desired to eat *this* passover with you!" Let His disciples think of that utterance being spoken to them at this moment. Do not relegate them to any past. He still has disciples; His "words do not pass away." Amid the agonies and sorrows of to-day, rejoice with Him that the change to a new and better order is becoming possible because of them. Verily, with desire He is eating this present passover of bloodshed and suffering with us because of the general spiritual advance that is to follow.

Now it was to this pass-over, from the Fishes to the Water-bearer,—a more important one than either of the previous two—that our Lord Himself alluded when asked where it should be kept. "Go ye into the city (the heavenly city or spiritual plane of cosmic causation) and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water. Follow him"; let the significance of the zodiacal symbol of the Water-bearer tell you what to expect. And these words bring us into direct contact with that large body of Old Testament prophecy that the time would come when the Christ-spirit should be poured out upon all nations and that the "earth" or present materialised human consciousness should become quickened and spiritualised and filled with God-consciousness—"the knowledge of God"—as the waters cover the sea. The transition through which the world is now passing is one betokening an organic change in the spiritual life of humanity. The Great Clock of the heavens has moved on and an hour is striking which portends the liberation from the plane of spirit of an unprecedented influx of mystical "water" into this interlinked plane of effects.

What is this mystical "water," and who the man with the pitcher that is to be poured forth abundantly? Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned, and it is

useless to think of them in physical terms. Common water is the physical correspondence with, and has provided the biblical writers with a convenient analogy and symbol for, that super-sensual water they so often mention—especially the writer of the fourth Gospel;—that pure, incorruptible eleutheric element which "wetteth not the hands" (as the old mystics so often say) and yet is the veritable *Aqua Vitæ* or Water of Life, of which whosoever drinketh never thirsts for anything besides. Universally interpenetrating, yet discrete from, the impure matter of the world of sense, as substantial and objective upon its own plane as common water is upon this, it yet eludes all sensual perception and verbal description and can be known only by its effects and attributes. As common water is a large ingredient of our mortal part, so this celestial fluid is an essential constituent of the soul; nay, it is the very stuff of pure souls, which are as it were crystallised individuations of it—as in the words "Many waters cannot quench love"—all the souls that are can never exhaust the superabundance of Divine Love; or as when the voice of Christ is likened to "the sound of many waters"—the multitude of the redeemed through whom He speaks. From the exhaustless reservoir of this ultra-natural element every soul that exists can renew, cleanse, and replenish itself perpetually, and, being "water of life," it is the vehicle and contains all the properties of true, as distinct from sensuous, life. It is the true and original "holy water," the universal solvent for all hardness of heart and the baptismal purifier from sin. It imparts health, because it *is* Health; it cleanses, because it *is* Purity; it brings wisdom and illumination of mind because it is the universal vehicle and medium through which the Divine Light and Intelligence are communicated to the human soul; it is the heavenly emollient which extinguishes the fire of earthly passion and concupiscence. What then must follow from a reposition of the cosmic spiritual mechanism which will liberate into the fiery, hate-torn psychic atmosphere of this unclean and frenzied planet an abnormal tide

of this celestial Life-stream?—for that will be the result of the present passover.

Look at any chart of the Zodiac, and the Aquarian sector of it will be found denoted by a pair of waved lines in imitation of rippling water, or by the figure of a man emptying downwards a pitcher of water. The idea has been expressed in various forms, but always with the same meaning; in Greek mythology, for instance, the man with the pitcher of water was personified by the comely youth Ganymede, the gods' cupbearer. But all prior forms and symbols became unified and realised in Christ, the actual "Man with the pitcher of water," the Divine Cupbearer who brought from the heavens the chalice of Life for the salvation of our race. "This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you." So, using the imagery of an ordinary drinking-cup, the first three Evangelists express the fact of the Divine outpouring. But entirely ignoring this sacramental method of expressing it and as though anxious to proclaim the idea it contained in a more striking and realistic manner, it is the great mystic of the fourth Gospel who gives us the full, unveiled truth of the matter. It is he alone who "bare record, and his record is true," that it was from no conventional cup, no merely symbolical chalice, that the outpouring of the Water of Life was communicated to this world, but that it was from no other pitcher than the Lord's own Body that "thereout came blood and water," and that, for the quickening of a fallen race from helpless sensual existence into incorruptible life, the Divine Life-essence and virginal soul-substance became injected into the psychic and physical fabric of this planet, whence its fermentation through subsequent ages would gradually cleanse and regenerate it. Inexhaustible are the implications of that great mystic vision recorded in John xix. 31-37, regarding that which streamed from the broken side of the Divine Pitcher, but there is no space to enlarge upon them here. But whoever can share that Evangelist's vision also "knoweth that he saith true,"—true in a way that, whilst supremely mystical, faithfully proclaims that

which has indeed been spiritually accomplished, but of which the full results are destined yet to mature and become manifest in ways which at present few foresee.

Have no results of that outpouring been yet experienced? Assuredly; but the fulness of those results has yet to come. Seed lies in the ground long before it sprouts. These last two thousand years have been needed to pave the way for the quickened soul-growth, the new order. "It was the preparation," St John tells us. The world had to be fully opened up; races and nations, East and West, knitted together into a whole of mutually interdependent parts; society consolidated; a spirit of concord and fraternity generated; the dross and rubble and false gods of current civilisation cleared away—processes which, these years past, have been in the doing, and the completing of which is being accomplished in the fiery crucible of to-day. The race cannot march forward, cannot attain a new grade of spiritual evolution, until its iniquities have been burned up and put behind it; and "without bloodshed is no remission of sins." Let no one lose, but rather take, courage in the presence of events apparently disastrous to all dreams and hopes of good. If they are the inevitable harvest of our past, they form the essential prelude to our better future. The ground must be swept and cleared before it can be built upon afresh. But the Hand that devastates also restores. We are not the less, but the more, in the presence of the Prince of Peace because He comes, as He promised, bringing a sword. *Christus Bifrons*; Saviour and Destroyer are one.

I looked and lo! 'mid the decay  
The Waster was the Builder too;  
And when the dust-cloud rolled away,  
I saw the new!

If we suffer from events the present passover has precipitated, what is it but that we have failed in the observance of injunctions the keeping of which would have kept us immune when the Destroying Angel

passed over us? Have we fed in our hearts upon the slain and mystic Lamb? Have we sprinkled its blood upon the sideposts and over-lintel of the "houses" of our personal organisms, our collective institutions, our civilisation, our—save the mark—Christianity, so plainly that in passing by He cannot fail to see at least some slight reflection of Himself in them? If not, then let them wither at His blast, as withering they are. For our external and psychical natures are our "sideposts," overhung and connected by the "lintel" of our spiritual will, all three of which, unless suffused by the Christ-spirit, the Lamb's blood, and manifesting it in a unity of purpose, thought, and act, become His easy prey. Only that in us which, when He draws nigh, is unassimilable to Him *can* suffer, whatever horrors we may witness, whatever losses or terrors may befall. Though He comes not to destroy for destruction's sake, but to fulfil, fulfilment is not feasible without the incidental destruction of everything alien to the Fulfiller. Where nothing refractory remains the Destroyer leaves the "house" untouched; He is mindful of His own and cannot destroy that which is Himself. Neither does He destroy without at the same time preserving and re-creating. The Passover-rite and the Eucharist are the dual aspects of a single feast; the one emphasises His aspect as Destroyer of spurious existence; the other, His aspect of Preserver unto everlasting life.

To such a testing, then, are the world and its institutions now being subjected, and the testing will continue until such conditions are attained as make a new order of things possible. Years will yet go to it, but time, as we count it, moves at its own pace when the cosmic processes of Spirit-action are at work. Count upon no half-measures; "His fan is in His hand and He will *thoroughly* purge His floor." Meanwhile, amid the break-up of all external things, an interior constructive work is going on, preparing upon the mental and psychic planes the conditions that will characterise the Aquarian age and the evolutionary change in human consciousness upon the threshold of which we now

stand. If that work is to be here described it must again be in the terms of another of those pregnant parables of cosmic evolution with which our Scriptures abound, and of which we have said, they are the chart.

A war-sickened world is gradually becoming ashamed of the old order of things upon which it has based its specious life. It sees its ideals crumbling; its institutions shattered; its religion a demonstrated sham; its Churches spiritual impotences; its science and wisdom applied to every perverse and devilish contrivance. It has exhausted the wine of its own vintage, is losing its zest for life as hitherto it has thought of life; and were not hidden help at hand, who could forecast the nature of the end of this present cataclysm?

Meanwhile, as it comes to honest and penitential recognition of these facts, behind the scenes of this external theatre-show the watchful Mother-heart of God can be heard whispering to Her Eternal Son—"They have no wine!"

(Think no longer of the old-time wedding-breakfast at a Syrian village you have been wont to imagine in connection with these words. Open your soul's eye to wider vision and watch from the plane of the spirit, as did the deep-seeing writer of that parabolic episode, the marriage-feast of the collective soul of humanity with God which has been preparing since time began.)

And through the heavens and the earth the answer of the Lord of all is sounding to all who work in the service of God and man, "Fill the waterpots with water!"

The implications of this great allegory are far wider than a single brief interpretation can exhaust; for our present purpose we need refer only to their cosmic bearing. What are those six waterpots which to-day the Christ of God is bidding His servants fill? Who the servants to whom that bidding is entrusted? What that mysterious water the secret springs of which "only the servants which draw the water know?" What has been said already in this article will have prepared the understanding for the comprehension of that to which I have been leading up in the hope of

making clear what, in its spiritual consequences, this pass-over into Aquarian conditions means for the human race.

Through six creative days or vast time-periods, and through six great human races, of which we are the fifth, the external organism of man is being evolved into a suitable and stable vessel for the Divine purpose, a receptacle in which God may come and dwell. Those six days will culminate in a seventh, one outside this plane of physical manifestation, for it will be a sabbath of rest so far as external preparation and activities are concerned, and man, having outgrown the need of a physical body, will have become translated from an outward world in which he has no abiding city and become integrated within the Holy City, the City of God; as St John hints elsewhere (iv. 28), "the woman (the soul) then left her waterpot and went her way into the city." It is we, then, who are the "waterpots," the Potter's vessels, fashioned of clay, shaped and hardened into consistency by the fires of mundane experience, and interiorly purified "after the manner of the Jew's purifying" for the reception of the Divine influx (remembering always that "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly" and nationally, "but which is one inwardly" and spiritually, and that over the Cross of Life, as over that of death, it is inscribed that Christ is the King of those Jews). In symbolising humanity by the term "waterpots" St John is only continuing the imagery of an older Scripture (Lam. iv. 2), which speaks of fallen man as being "esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter." Once brought to sufficient perfection and purity, it is the external natural mentality of man that needs to be filled—"fill them to the brim"—with that finer element of supernal "water" of which we have already spoken, and the inpouring of which into the natural intelligence will soften all the present hardness of his heart, break up the materialism of his mind, cleanse and clarify his now obtuse and limited vision, arouse him to fulness of his best emotions, awaken to high uses his psychic faculties, and refine and fertilise his

"earth," as his present gross earthy-mindedness is always biblically described.

It is difficult to impart any idea of the enormous transformation in the human outlook, in social affairs, in the human consciousness generally, that will result from all that is implied by "filling the waterpots with water." We have no historic standard by which any such organic change in collective human nature can be measured or with which it can be contrasted, though the alteration in the quality of life and consciousness observable in an individual who has experienced an inward regenerating baptism provides some indication of what a universal regeneration will bring to pass. Look not for it to happen by any abrupt miraculous change. The processes of the Spirit come without observation, here a little and there a little, and are infinitely subtle and gentle. The years will pass, generations come and go, and outward things proceed much as usual. But all the while there will be stealthily flowing in the incoming tide of that crystal ocean which circles around God's throne, and whose rivers shall yet fill our whole earth as the waters cover the sea. As infants are ignorant of their sacramental baptism, so will the majority of upgrown children be unconscious of this silent interior baptism which shall Christ-en them indeed. And as once the world was flooded physically and destructively for the extinction of its sins, so now, and complementarily, shall it be flooded psychically and constructively for the preservation and quickening of the Christ-seed already sown in it, and that it may bring forth fruit unto God in due season. First that which is natural and death-dealing; afterwards that which is spiritual and quickening,—fountains of living water flowing from the opened heart of Life itself and communicating nothing but what ministers to essential life in us. Such will be the action of the water that "wetteth not the hands," and which "only the servants which draw the water know."

Already for long past many servants in this world, and many more beyond it, have been filling the waterpots with water. And for this oncoming Aquarian age



many others are needed for the work. First filling their own cisterns from the Great Reservoir, they in turn are called to act as service-pipes of the Living Water and to distribute it among their fellows, themselves becoming men with a pitcher of water in imitation of the Divine Water-bearer and irrigating the parched earth and arid understandings of those who "have nothing to draw with." The result of that outpouring is already manifest in many ways. In some it appears in quickened responsiveness to spiritual presentations of truth, and in enhanced consciousness of the Divine Presence and Life flooding through all; in some in an intense love for others, a passion for brotherhood and social betterment; in still others in the acuter vision and deeper penetration of the scientific mind, the intelligence of the inventor, new perceptions of beauty, sound, and colour by the artist, and so on according to individual reaction to that unrecognised new factor which is enriching the world's mental atmosphere upon which we all draw. And as the waterpots become filled more and more nearly "to the brim," and human nature becomes more and more permeated by this enriching element, we may count upon increasing manifestations of psychological development, the awakening of latent psychic powers upon a larger scale, and a wider diffusion of the mystical spirit now abroad among us and which the experiences entailed by the present passover are deepening and intensifying. "Upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit," and the promise is being fulfilled. One cannot speak openly of much that is occurring silently and beyond public knowledge. But hewers of wood and drawers of water are at work, and whilst such menial occupations are proverbially those of people who are obscure and unimportant in the world's eye, in that of heaven the drawers of the Living Water have the privilege of discharging perhaps the most important task that can be assigned to men. Yes, many servants are engaged to-day in filling the waterpots; many who have put off their body of flesh, but are labouring beyond the range

of the outer eye; and, often in conscious conjunction with these, many who work upon this side of the veil.

"God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;  
The rest may reason, and welcome! 'tis we musicians (and mystics) know."

The universal quickening of the present materialised understandings of men into a vivid mystical consciousness must appear now to many an almost hopeless prospect. Only those lacking in faith and vision will argue so, or will doubt the capacity of the Christ-power to perform upon the earth-plane that "first miracle," that prime example of His cosmic redeeming influence, which St John's clear vision saw emblazoned predestinately in the archetypal heavens, but which his pen translated into the modest, simple narrative of the homely wedding-feast of Cana, leaving it to our spiritual discernment to gather his real purport. The true servant—and it is for such that I am writing now—has no such doubts. Knowing himself not to be greater than his Lord, he will not wonder how or reason why, but set about fulfilling his little part as and where he stands. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it!" It is not the work of the superficial pseudo-mystic or the shallow sentimentalist; he from whose side are to flow rivers of living waters for the welfare of his fellows must, like his Lord, first have been bound upon a cross and have suffered his compassionate life-essence to issue from a heart that has been pierced and torn. So there will be no fuss, no hurry—our times are in His hand—no officiousness, no self-advertising; but just the obeying of those clear intuitions through which He speaks to us and taking the opportunities that daily arise to transmit to this seeking fellow-soul or that the life-giving flow which is streaming into the world and needing every available conduit for its distribution. Often enough one's do-ing, one's most useful and intense form of spiritual activity, will be found in a wise passiveness; in the silent offering up of a cleansed mind and fervent heart as a focus point and chalice for the Divine inflow. For when we are ourselves

filled and "our cup runneth over," that rippling overflow of our essential being, the very radiations of the upwelling meditations of our hearts, mingle with the confused and muddy mental sea from which all men draw in common and help to tincture and make it purer for them. For the mystic never lives, and cannot live, unto himself alone. First filling his own cistern, thereafter he becomes an involuntary and self-less instrument through which, in increasing volume, the water of salvation flows to others. And the words of the son of Sirach are his: "I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed; and lo! my brook became a river and my river a sea. I make doctrine to shine in the morning and send forth her light afar off; and, behold, I have not laboured for myself only, but for all them that seek wisdom" (Ecclus. xxiv. 31-34).

The completing and perfecting of the Christ-work in humanity will follow at a later season than the Aquarian age of which we have been speaking. "My hour is not yet come"—the hour, that is, for consummating that task which it is now the servants' privilege to prepare for and make possible. Not until all the six waterpots have been prepared and purified and filled to the brim with the Water of Life can that great miracle of transmutation take place by which the collective soul of Humanity will be still further quickened into self-conscious Divine Spirit and know itself as irrevocably in union with God. That is the climax to which, through all our passovers and all our journeyings through the ages, our spiritual evolution is leading. He has kept "the good wine" until last.